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An Exact COPY

OF A

LETTER

FROM THE

COUNT D'AVAU

His Most CHRISTIAN MAJESTIES Ambassador

AT THE

H A G U E.

Dated the 9th of JANUARY 1684.

And Directed to the KING his MASTER, which was intercepted by the Marquess DE GRANA Governour of the Spanish Netherlands. As also the Copies of other Three Letters relating to the same Affair.

The Honourable two days ago to make known to your Majesty that the Lords of Amsterdam desired that I would by a Memorial to the States general, make known those good Sentiments which your Majesty hath taken up for the rest and quiet of that republic. In case the Spaniards should let pass without effect, the prefixed time of the Month of Jan. but that I had refused to present such a Memorial. In the mean time, Sir, the Lords of Amsterdam are not able by their Authority to bring the States General to deliberate upon some Affairs, to do which it will be necessary that Pensionary Fogel and the Deputies of the States General do consent before they look upon themselves obliged by the presentation of a Memorial. But as it was too late for to Answer the designs of the Lords of Amsterdam, that the States General should enter into a deliberation of what measures they should take: in case an accommodation should not be concluded betwixt your Majesty and Spain before the end of this Month.

We have sought after all expedients that might supply the defects of a Memorial, and they laid before me that I should yield, that the Deputies of the States General should ingage in a conference with me: In the which a Friend of Amsterdam, one of the Holland Deputies should demand of me my Thoughts concerning what should happen, in case the Spaniards should not accept some of your Majesties propositions before the end of Jan. from whence he might find matter enough for the deliberation of the States General to me. I agreed, and the Lords of Amsterdam went immediately to desire two of the Deputies of the States General, that were most inclined to the interest of the P. of O. that they would accept of a Deputation, and it was to be demanded from me. To give an express Answer to the Complaints relating to the Ship called the Reagle; these were presently ready and glad that they saw the Lords of Amsterdam, willing to make Complaints against France, but others seeing further then they saw, that the design of the Lords of Amsterdam was nothing else but to get a Conference with me. This being their suspicion, was the cause that this expedient took no effect; but the necessity in which the States General found themselves to return me a Complement, upon my giving them notice of the birth of the D. of Anjou did give us an opportunity of another expedient, which by the vigilance of the Lords of Amsterdam was not less serviceable to us than the former.

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For

For upon such Occasion, there being no more than three Deputies appointed, it fell out luckily (all places having their turns) to fall upon the Deputies of *Holland*, *Freeiland*, and *Groningham*; to come to me; so that the Lords of *Amsterdam* having thoroughly informed the Lords of *Friesland* and *Groningham*, and desired the aforesaid two Lords to discourse with me in the same manner, that the Deputies of *Amsterdam* should have discoursed with me, in case the Deputation of the States General had been compleated, the three aforesaid Deputies came yesterday to me, and gave me to understand how much the States General rejoiced in the happy Birth of the D of *Anjou*. After which the Deputies of *Freeiland* and *Groningham* began a Discourse of those Disturbances which might arise, in case the *Spaniards* should pass by the Month of *Jan.* without effect. The Deputy of *Holland*, that had the Precedency declared that the Discourse that happened between us was of importance enough to be reported to the States General; and in regard he could not do it except I gave it him in Writing, he therefore desired that I would put it into the form of a Memorial: I answered him that he was in the right, if I had any thing to propose, or was to request any thing in the behalf of your Majesty, but that this was only as an Answer to what was said to me by those Lords that were in the same Deputation; and that it was not a request of your Majesty, and that it was sufficient for them that they knew it might be granted them, when the States General should think it matter of Advantage to them; and therefore I left it to them to examine what was most for their Convenience; and that I would give them further Satisfaction, in case they desired a larger Information of your Majesties Sentiments; after which the said Deputies took their leave, and about an hour after that, the Deputies of *Amsterdam* came to visit me, and to inform me of their Endeavour, and that no matters came into debate before the States General but what came by way of Memorial; but that notwithstanding, when a Minister had discoursed with the Deputies of the States General, that the Deputies did agree amongst themselves, whether the matter then Discoursed off ought to be a matter of deliberation or not, and that the Deputies of *Friesland* and *Groningham* had given their words that they did agree, that all the Discourse that happened in the last Conference ought to be taken into deliberation. But

Sir, notwithstanding all these precautions, the Lords of *Amsterdam* dare not be confident that the States General will take this Affair into deliberation; for the Authority of the P. of O. and the direction of Penfianary *Fagel* is very great; which appears plain enough, for that the Lords of *Amsterdam* could not prevail so far with the States General, as to take into deliberation the Memorials of the 11th of *Novemb.* and the 29 of *Decemb.* last, which I presented to them; they also declared to me that they could wish that I would present a Memorial, though it were only to make publick the good Inclinations of your Majesty to the Republick; alledging that the knowledge of what has been already done, has had so considerable effects, that it is to be hoped they will have more when it comes to be spread abroad. They also insinuated to me that a Memorial might be so formed, as that the Proposals might seem no otherwise intended but to the advantage of the States General: As for Example,

That I having observed from several Discourses from the Members of this Government, the apprehensions they have of the Arms of your Majesty, in case the *Spaniards* should not come to an accommodation before the end of *Jan.* of which having the honour to give an account to your Majesty, and that your Majesty had given me order to declare to the States General that in case they remained as they were, and that they would send order to those Troops that were sent to assist the *Spaniards*, not to A& otherwise then for the defence of the *Spanish* Garrisons, that then your Majesty, for the quieting of the Apprehensions of the States General, will promise and assure them to desist from further Attacks, and turn your Arms elsewhere; and that he would be contented only with quartering of Troops and raising of Contributions.

As to what concerns the Assurance which your Majesty expects from them, that they will not begin any new Levy; that is an Affair that must be discoursed by word of Mouth and not by Memorial; for that would look like meddling with their Government: but it will be enough to say before them, that they continue in the condition in which they are, and such other Matters as may be convenient, and then they will sooner think of the Cakiering of Troops, than raising more. The Lords of *Amsterdam* have extremely pressed me to obtain this permission from your Majesty, assuring me, that they will not be wanting, that it shall obtain its end: They have also assured me there is hardly a day passes, but they gain some of the Cities of *Holland* to their Sentiments, and that they have just now obtained the like from one of the Principal, and that they are using all endeavours to bring the

Spaniards

Spaniards to an Accomodation, which if they cannot obtain, that then such methods should be used as was proposed for the Peace and Security of the *Netherlands*, and that they hoped that the Provinces of *Friesland* and *Groningham* will come over to their Sentiments, and therefore desired me to discourse with some of their Deputies, that they may continue steadfast.

Sir, I can assure your Majesty, That the Lords of *Amsterdam* have been wanting in nothing on their part, and that they are not wanting in their endeavours with other Cities: But, Sir, I must not forget to lay before your Majesty, That some of the Members of this State have made difficulty to allow your Majesty to come with Military Execution upon the open Countrey of the *Spanish Netherlands*, for that being done, it will be impossible for those Provinces to maintain themselves, they being deprived of Subsistence, and that it will tend immediately to the taking away of the *Barriere*.

In case the ways through *Flanders* had been secure, I should not have taken the freedom to have sent this Patquet by a Courier; but because I could not have written till Thursday by the way of *Liege*, I thought it a matter of greater importance then to defer it till that day, from giving your Majesty Account of Affairs in this Countrey; for that it appears to me to be a Matter of so great a Concern, that your Majesty be exactly informed thereof.

In case the Dispositions which I perceive in the Minds of People do not suddenly change, this Affair in a few days will come to a great extremity. Your Majesty well knows that in the beginning the Prince of *Orange* endeavoured to win those of *Amsterdam* to consent to the Levies; but not obtaining his end, he would resolve it in the Assembly of the *States of Holland*; notwithstanding the opposition of the Lords of *Amsterdam*; there was in the beginning but one City that declared they could not consent, that a Matter of so great importance should be brought to a Resolution without a general consent: The Prince of *Orange* flattered himself that he could bring that City to agree with the rest, and so have concluded the Matter. But the Lords of *Amsterdam* being animated by the goodness of your Majesty, declared towards them, and being strengthened by those Methods laid before them, were not contented only to refuse their Levies, but inveighed severely against them, and have made so great an Interest in many of the Cities, that several of them are come over to their Sentiments.

And thus your Majesty may see how this Matter continued for some time; the Prince of *Orange* not being able to bear the Affront any longer, after four days entered upon a desperate Resolution, for considering that there were more Cities in *Holland* that gave their consent for the Levies, notwithstanding the opposition of *Amsterdam*, then those against it, he took a Resolution, to cause all the Cities to give their Voices; and though there might be six or seven that might agree with *Amsterdam* in the same Sentiments, yet he intended to conclude the Levies by pluralities of Voices.

But 'tis believed his principal Design was to save his Reputation abroad, by causing the said Levies to be resolved on, against the consent of *Amsterdam*; it being well known in this Countrey, that Pensionary *Fagell* can come to what Conclusion he pleases, though against the Constitution of the Republick, when assisted by the power of the Prince of *Orange*; and it is as well known that he can have no great advantage by this Resolution, for that no man will venture to lend money to the Solicitors for the advancing of these Levies. And this is the Sentiment of the P. of O. which he declared to the *Heer van Haren*; whom he also told, that he would come to his Resolution the next Week: but though this Resolution may be of little profit to the Prince of *Orange*, yet in other respects it may be of great advantage to him; either by reason of those great Divisions that will be made in the State, or by pleasing the *Marquis De Grana*, hereby to make *Spain* believe that the *Hollanders* will send great Supplies to them, and that the *Amsterdammers* use endeavours to prevent it.

Sir, As for me, I hope that for the same reason that makes me fear the Lords of *Amsterdam* will not be able to obtain any thing against the will of the Prince of *Orange*, that the *States General* will not have cause to complain of your Majesty concerning the Assurance desired of them; that the Prince of *Orange* should not be able to gain his end in raising the Levies against the will of *Amsterdam*; and in case he pursues his Resolution, it will soon appear that it will be to little purpose, for that it will be easier both for one and the other side to traverse each other in their Sentiments, then to cause them to take effect.

I must say this further to your Majesty, That *Monsieur Paes*, and others of the same Sentiment have re-assumed Courage, and told their Friends that they had not flattered them in acquainting them with what your Majesty hath done in *Flanders* of Good 186, and yet less.

That

That the Lords of *Amsterdam* have had Resolution enough; and for certain, in case the Prince of *Orange* shall attempt any thing by violence, he will meet with more oppositions than he imagines.

Sir, This is that which obliges me to represent to your Majesty, That I cannot so easily and speedily as formerly, have the honour of your Majesties Orders, relating to Affairs that may accidentally happen; and in case your Majesty shall think good to give me any Orders tending to your service, with permission to execute the same as occasion requires, they may be of great use for the supporting of those of *Amsterdam* to offer upon such Expedients as they shall propose me, that so your Majesty might not be at a loss to present a Memorial in case of necessity; but if not, yet to desire a Conference with the *States General*, who will immediately send their Deputies to discourse with me in this Affair: and in pursuance of this Conference, I would deliver over in writing what has been discoursed betwixt us, which would be a means to palliate the matter; for the Lords of *Amsterdam* are not a little alarmed at the pretended coming over of a 136, and do say that it is nothing else but to amuse them: that I am to attempt to make these propositions to them; and that it is nothing but more advantage the interest of your Majesty, then to show them that I am out of the respect to them that you have bin so frank in your proceedings, and that it is which must persuade them when we enter upon those expedients, which will not too much ingage your Majesty. I most humbly beseech your Majesty that you will be pleased to let me know if there be any Affairs wherein I might launch out my self to the uttermost, without being any obstruction to what your Majesty demands, relating to the ruin of the open Countrey of the *Spaniards*, in which I find so many difficulties, if the matter should come so far, which I yet question: I do not give my self the honour to ask of your Majesty what I must do as to the assurance that may be desired of the Lords of *Amsterdam*, in case they cannot bring the *States General* to grant unto your Majesty what has been laid before me, (as yet I know not what the intent of your Majesty is) I can only say that the Lords of *Amsterdam* have not as yet explained that matter, and have told me expressly that these are remedies they must only have recourse unto, in case of the uttermost extremity: neither will they say any thing to me of that Affair, before they have lost all hopes of obtaining from the *States General* those assurances of giving your Majesty satisfaction, which they do yet flatter themselves they shall obtain.

A Copy of a Letter from Monsieur de Saint Didier to Monsieur de Mesmes.

Here hath bin here no Alterations since I have had the honour of Writing to you by *Cassel*, I had also two days ago the same honour of Writing to you by the way of *Liege*. The Lords of *Amsterdam* do their endeavours, and Monsieur D'Avaux so manages his Affairs as to obtain his ends; and in case Affairs cannot be brought to succeed according to our wishes, it must be imputed to the great opposition we meet with. In the mean time we can promise our selves that these Affairs will not come much short of our desires; as for me I make it too much my interest as well in Relation of my Station, as to the honour of Monsieur D'Avaux, as to wish that all things may come to a happy Issue.

Sir, your most humble and obedient Servant, Saint Didier.

The Copy of a Letter to Monsieur de Mesmes 9th Jan. 1684.

Affairs here are brought to a great extremity, and I do foresee they will grow more difficult. It is not likely that any thing can be obtained in the midst of these disorders against the will of the Prince of *Orange*; but the Lords of *Amsterdam* will never consent to the Levies: It is believed he will do it in Opposition to them, which we must expect.

A Copy of a Letter from Father Limoion to the Reverend Father Grenier at Marseilles, Dated at the HAGUE, Second of January, 1684.

Most Reverend Father and Master,

The Affairs of State in these parts is to prevent the United Provinces from proceeding in the Levies, that so the King may the next Campaign make himself Master of the Spanish Netherlands, we flatter them here with illusory Promises: for in all probability within four Months we shall have a Bloody War.

F I N I S.

